

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (Original): A coupling member including:
a body portion formed with a hook;
a closure shaft slidably mounted in a first axial direction in the body for movement between open and closed positions; and
a locking member carried by the closure shaft and being movable between locked and unlocked positions, the arrangement being such that when the locking member is in its locked position, it prevents movement of the closure shaft from its closed position.

Claim 2 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 1 wherein the locking member includes a locking pin which is slidably mounted in the closure shaft, the pin having a head and wherein the body portion includes a slot or keyway, the arrangement being such that the locking pin needs to be moved to its unlocked position so that the pin can then move in the slot or keyway when the closure shaft moves.

Claim 3 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 2 wherein the hook has a terminal portion which is generally transverse to the direction of movement of the closure shaft.

Claim 4 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 3 wherein the terminal portion includes a recess which receives a free end of the closure shaft in its closed position.

Claim 5 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 4 wherein the recess is a blind recess.

Claim 6 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 4 wherein the recess is in the form of a bore which passes through the terminal portion.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 4, 5 or 6~~claim 4 wherein the closure shaft is biased towards its closed position.

Claim 8 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 7 wherein the closure shaft is biased towards its closed position by means of a compression spring.

Claim 9 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 2 to 8~~claim 2 wherein the locking pin is biased towards its locked position.

Claim 10 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 2 to 9~~claim 2 including an actuator which is mounted for sliding movement on the body in a second direction parallel to said first axial direction, the actuator having a recess in which the head of the locking pin is slidably mounted in a third direction which is transverse to said second direction.

Claim 11 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 10 including a compression spring which biases the locking pin towards its locked position, the arrangement being such that the user, in use, presses the head inwardly relative to the actuator so that the locking pin moves in said third direction to its unlocked position so that the user can then slide the actuator in said second direction which moves the closure shaft in said first direction from its closed position to its open position.

Claim 12 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 11 wherein an inner end of the locking pin includes a locking projection which is seated in a locking recess formed in the body portion when the locking pin is in its locked position and wherein the locking projection is clear of said locking recess when the locking pin is in its unlocked position.

Claim 13 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~
claim 1 wherein the body portion is an integral body.

Claim 14 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~
claim 1 wherein the body portion is composed of a number of components and includes means
for fixing the components together.

Claim 15 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 14 wherein the body portion
includes first and second complementary moulded body parts, which define a guideway for
constraining the closure shaft for movement in said first direction.

Claim 16 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 15 wherein the complementary
moulded body parts define a recess for receipt of a main compression spring, a free end of which
acts against an inner end of the closure shaft.

Claim 17 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 10 wherein the body portion
includes first and second complementary moulded body parts, wherein the complementary body
parts are formed with first projections which cooperate with second projections formed on the
actuator to define a key and keyway for constraining the actuator to sliding movement relative to
the body portion in said second direction.

Claim 18 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in ~~any one of claims 14 to~~
~~17~~ claim 14 wherein the body portion includes first and second side plates which are disposed
laterally relative to said first and second ~~mounded~~ moulded body parts.

Claim 19 (Original): A coupling member as claimed in claim 18 wherein the means for fixing the components together include a plurality of rivets which extend between the side plates and clamp the moulded body parts therebetween.

Claim 20 (Currently amended): A coupling member as claimed in claim 18 ~~or 19~~ wherein the moulded body parts are injection moulded from plastics material and the side plates are metallic.

Claim 21 (Original): A coupling member including:
a body portion formed with a hook having a terminal portion;
a closure shaft slidably mounted in the body for movement between open and closed positions;
biasing means for biasing the closure shaft towards its closed position characterised in that the
terminal portion of the hook includes a recess or bore and wherein a free end of the
closure shaft is located in the bore or recess when it is in its closed position.